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Letter dated 11 June 2002 from the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to attach herewith the assessment of the work of the Security Council for the month of April 2002 (see annex).

This assessment has been prepared under my own responsibility following consultations with members of the Council, pursuant to the note by the President of the Security Council dated 12 June 1997 (S/1997/451), and should not be considered as representing the views of the Council.

I should be grateful if the present letter and the attached assessment could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Sergey **Lavrov**
Ambassador

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Annex to the letter dated 11 June 2002 from the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

Assessment of the work of the Security Council during the presidency of the Russian Federation (April 2002)

Introduction

In April 2002, under the presidency of Ambassador Sergey Lavrov, Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation, the Security Council dealt with a number of important issues.

A major focus of the attention of the Council during the month was the situation in the Middle East, particularly in the occupied territories. This issue was considered by the Council 34 times at public and private meetings and in closed consultations.

The Council was also actively seized of issues regarding Afghanistan, Bougainville (Papua New Guinea), Cyprus, East Timor, Georgia, Iraq/Kuwait and Western Sahara. An important public meeting was devoted to the progress in the implementation of resolution 1244 (1999) regarding the situation in Kosovo, Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. Much of the Security Council's time was dedicated to African issues: Angola, Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Eritrea/Ethiopia, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia. The work of the Counter-Terrorism Committee was reviewed at a public meeting and in consultations. The Council sent a mission to the Great Lakes region.

During the month of April the Council adopted four resolutions and three presidential statements. It held 16 public meetings and 4 private meetings and its members met in informal consultations on 34 occasions. On one occasion the Council held a meeting with troop-contributing countries.

Through its web site, the presidency published the provisional programme of work of the Council and statements to the press which the President was authorized to make on behalf of the Council members.

Africa

Angola

On 18 April the Council adopted resolution 1404 (2002), by which it extended the mandate of the monitoring mechanism established pursuant to resolution 1295 (2000) for a further period of six months, until 19 October 2002. In the resolution the monitoring mechanism is requested to report periodically to the Committee established pursuant to resolution 864 (1993), and to provide a follow-up report on the implementation of the sanctions against UNITA.

On 23 April the Secretary-General's Special Adviser on Africa, Ibrahim Gambari, briefed the Security Council on his mission to Angola where, on 4 April, he witnessed the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of Angola and UNITA. The Special Adviser highlighted recent progress in the peace process in the country and said that the chances of returning to war in Angola were negligible, but that the irreversibility of the peace process would depend on a number of factors: the quartering of soldiers of UNITA had to be done properly and on schedule; the humanitarian needs of their families must be met adequately; conditions must be created for the promotion of national reconciliation; and UNITA should emerge as a united political party and credible interlocutor in the Angola peace process. Seven critical areas where the United Nations might play a supporting role were listed. They included military observation of the UNITA quartering process, provision of technical and managerial support in quartering areas, demobilization, reintegration and humanitarian support, and electoral assistance. The United Nations is also expected to chair the Joint Commission during the second phase of the peace process.

Burundi

On 22 April the Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs, Danilo Türk, briefed the Council on the situation in Burundi. He alerted the Council to the difficulties that could emerge in the absence of an agreement on a cessation of hostilities.

Following consultations, the President of the Council made a statement to the press reiterating the

support of Council members for the efforts of the facilitation and regional initiative to expedite ceasefire negotiations, and calling on all belligerents to cease hostilities immediately and on the armed groups to enter into ceasefire negotiations without further delay with a view to concluding a ceasefire agreement. Members of the Council commended the work of the Tripartite Commission to facilitate the voluntary repatriation of refugees, called on the international community to support the process in the framework of the Arusha Agreement and urged the donor community to increase assistance to Burundi.

Democratic Republic of the Congo

Council members were briefed on 2 April by the Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Hédi Annabi, on the latest developments in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, specifically on the alleged military presence of the Congolese Armed Forces in the vicinity of Moliro. The Council members called on all Congolese parties to withdraw all armed elements from Moliro and asked them to respect scrupulously resolution 1399 (2002).

On 10 April the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Jean-Marie Guéhenno, briefed the Council on the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and on the progress achieved at the inter-Congolese dialogue in Sun City, South Africa. He also introduced the first assessment report prepared by MONUC on the armed groups operating in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

On 23 April the Council members welcomed the significant progress made in the inter-Congolese dialogue at Sun City on 19 April. They noted that the political agreement reached through the dialogue between the Government and MLC, to which a majority of the participants were also parties, could facilitate the political transition and help to consolidate the regional peace process in the Democratic Republic of the Congo based on the Lusaka Agreement and the resolutions of the Security Council.

Eritrea and Ethiopia

During consultations of the whole on 10 April, the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations briefed the Council on the situation in Ethiopia and Eritrea in anticipation of the announcement of the decision of the Eritrea-Ethiopia Boundary Commission on 13 April.

On 13 April a statement was issued to the press by the President of the Security Council on the decision of the Eritrea-Ethiopia Boundary Commission, announced in The Hague.

On 16 April members of the Council heard briefings by the Secretary-General and his Special Representative, Legwaila Joseph Legwaila, on the Boundary Commission's decision on the delimitation of the border between the two countries. Members of the Council welcomed the decision and highly appreciated the role played by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, UNMEE and the United Nations in achieving such an outcome. They called on both Governments to closely cooperate with the Boundary Commission and UNMEE in the implementation without delay of the border decision and all aspects of the demarcation process.

Guinea-Bissau

On 10 April the Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs, Ibrahima Fall, presented to the Council the Secretary-General's report on the situation in Guinea-Bissau.

Members of the Council took note of a slight overall improvement with respect to the political situation in Guinea-Bissau, although certain crucial aspects of the settlement still caused concern. They called upon the Government of Guinea-Bissau and the international donor community to do all in their power to move ahead decisively to implement the current demobilization plan and restructure the armed forces.

Liberia

On 22 April the Council considered the report of the Panel of Experts on Liberia. The Chairman of the Committee established by resolution 1343 (2001) briefed Council members on the results of the Committee's preliminary discussion on the recommendations contained in the report. It was noted that there had been significant progress in settlement of the conflict in Sierra Leone and improvement of the relationship between States members of the Mano River Union since the adoption of resolution 1343 (2001). At the same time the Council members recognized that the political situation in the subregion remained unstable. Many Council members were of the

view that Liberia still had not fully complied with the demands of the Council, and indicated their support for the extension of the measures imposed by resolution 1343 (2001).

Western Sahara

The Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations briefed the Council on 25 April on the latest developments on the ground in Western Sahara. Members of the Council discussed the four options for settling the dispute over the territory described in the report of the Secretary-General of 19 February 2002. On 30 April they unanimously adopted resolution 1406 (2002) extending the mandate of the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara until 31 July 2002 in order to consider further the above-mentioned report.

Asia

Afghanistan

On 5 April members of the Council heard a regular briefing from the Secretary-General on the situation in Afghanistan, which was devoted to the security situation and related issues. It was noted that some progress had been achieved in the security area in Kabul, owing to the activities of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF). Members of the Council stressed the need to continue efforts to improve security throughout the country, especially during the period of work of the Loya Jirga. They welcomed the proposals by the Interim Administration on security sector reform and expressed their gratitude to those countries that were providing assistance to the Afghans in that area. Council members highly appreciated the activities of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Afghanistan, Lakhdar Brahimi, and UNAMA, and supported the United Nations role as coordinator of international efforts in Afghanistan.

At a public meeting on 25 April the Council was addressed by Sima Samar, Vice-Chairman of the Interim Administration of Afghanistan and Minister for Women. She expressed deep appreciation to the United Nations and the Security Council for supporting the peace process in Afghanistan and their commitment to assisting in its reconstruction and rebuilding. She specifically stressed the need to provide security throughout the country and spoke in favour of the expansion of ISAF beyond Kabul.

At the same meeting the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, Kieran Prendergast, made a regular briefing on the situation in Afghanistan. He particularly addressed the process of convening the Loya Jirga, and touched upon the activities of UNAMA and ISAF. He also informed the Council of the measures taken by the Interim Administration to eradicate the poppy crop and the latest developments in security sector reform, the return of refugees and reconstruction assistance.

Bougainville, Papua New Guinea

On 17 April the Head of the United Nations Political Office in Bougainville, Noel Sinclair, briefed the Council on the achievements of the peace process. Members of the Council welcomed the actions of the Parliament of Papua New Guinea that gave legal effect to the bills implementing the Peace Agreement and called upon all the parties to redouble efforts aimed at the removal of weapons from Bougainville communities, which is crucial for post-conflict rehabilitation and peace-building.

East Timor

On 16 April the Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations briefed the Council on the first presidential elections held in East Timor. Members of the Council welcomed the successful holding of the vote and the commitment of the people of East Timor to peaceful coexistence and democracy.

On 26 and 29 April a public meeting of the Security Council was held to discuss proposals for the United Nations role in East Timor after independence put forward in the latest report of the Secretary-General. The President-elect, Xanana Gusmão, the Chief Minister, Mari Bin Amude Alkatiri, and the Secretary-General addressed the participants. Members of the Council noted with satisfaction that the United Nations had made a historic contribution to the transition of East Timor from a non-self-governing territory through a United Nations Transitional Administration to an independent State. They reaffirmed their view that the United Nations system should continue to play an important role in further assisting the people of East Timor together with the bilateral and multilateral donors, regional mechanisms,

non-governmental organizations, the private sector and other possible actors from within the international community.

Iraq

On 4 April the Council was briefed by the Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations on the report of the Secretary-General on UNIKOM.

The President of the Security Council sent a letter to the Secretary-General stating that the Council members agreed with his recommendation to extend the mandate of UNIKOM for another period of six months.

On 17 April the United Nations High-level Coordinator, Yuli Vorontsov, presented to the Council the latest report on the repatriation of Kuwaiti and third-country nationals. Members of the Council expressed their hope that this issue would continue to be dealt with as a strictly humanitarian one by all sides concerned.

The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question

On 1 April the Secretary-General briefed the Council on the situation in the Middle East and called on both Prime Minister Ariel Sharon and Chairman Yasser Arafat to exercise responsible leadership. In the afternoon, the Council met in consultations to discuss a request from the Arab Group to hold an urgent public meeting.

On 2 April the Council held two private meetings on the Middle East with the Permanent Representative of Israel and the Permanent Observer of Palestine.

During the luncheon the same day the Secretary-General shared with members of the Council his assessment of the Arab summit in Beirut and expressed his concern about the situation in the Middle East, particularly along the Blue Line.

The Security Council held a public meeting on the Middle East on 3 April followed by consultations.

On 4 April members of the Council heard a briefing from the Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations on the incident in which a number of United Nations military observers were assaulted by Hezbollah in the area of the Blue Line.

Also on 4 April the Council resumed its public meeting on the Middle East. The Secretary-General addressed Council members. The Council unanimously adopted resolution 1403 (2002), in which it demanded the implementation of resolution 1402 (2002) without delay and welcomed the efforts of the Quartet envoys and the mission to the region of the United States Secretary of State.

On 6 April the President of the Council met with the Permanent Representative of Tunisia as Chairman of the Arab Group, together with the Permanent Representative of the Syrian Arab Republic and the Permanent Observer of Palestine, who submitted a request for the convening of a public meeting on the Middle East. Following this request of the Arab Group, the Council met on 7 April in consultations, during which some members insisted on pressing their request for a public meeting, while others emphasized the necessity for the Council to meet privately and separately with Israeli and Palestinian representatives.

On 8 April the Council held private meetings with the Permanent Representative of Israel and the Permanent Observer of Palestine. The same day during the consultations the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs briefed the Council members on developments in the Middle East. In the afternoon the Council held a public meeting on the issue.

The Council resumed the public meeting on the Middle East on 9 April. In the afternoon during consultations of the whole the Council discussed a draft resolution introduced by the Syrian Arab Republic on behalf of the Arab Group and the States members of the Non-Aligned Movement.

On 10 April the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs briefed the Council on the situation on the ground in the Middle East and on the Secretary-General's participation in the meeting of the Quartet in Madrid. The same day after consultations the Council adopted at a formal meeting a presidential statement (S/PRST/2002/9) expressing its support for the joint statement on the Middle East issued at Madrid by the Quartet.

On 12 April the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs briefed the Council on the situation in the Middle East, including the Secretary-General's observations on an international force which might be deployed in the Middle East, stressing that it should be a multinational and not a United Nations force.

On 18 April the Secretary-General informed the Council of his views on the possible deployment of a multinational force in the area of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. He emphasized that such a force should be authorized by a Security Council resolution under Chapter VII. Members of the Council expressed their deep concern over the situation in the Jenin refugee camp in the West Bank. In the afternoon the Council held a public meeting on the Middle East.

On 19 April after consultations the Council resumed the public meeting. Later that day, following intensive consultations on a draft resolution, the Council met again in a public meeting and unanimously adopted resolution 1405 (2002), in which it emphasized the urgency of access of humanitarian organizations to the Palestinian civilian population and welcomed the initiative of the Secretary-General to develop accurate information on recent events in the Jenin refugee camp through a fact-finding team.

During consultations of the whole on 23 April members of the Council expressed their full support for the implementation of resolution 1405 (2002) and their hope that Israel would cooperate fully with the Secretary-General and the fact-finding team. Council members also expressed serious concern for the safety of Chairman Arafat and emphasized that the siege of the Palestinian Authority compound must be lifted.

During consultations on 24 April the Council members confirmed to the Secretary-General their support for his efforts to implement resolution 1405 (2002). The Syrian Arab Republic circulated a draft resolution relating to the matter. Members of the Council agreed to put off a vote on the draft pending the Secretariat's meeting with the Israeli delegation.

On 25 April the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs briefed the Council on the talks with the Israeli delegation concerning the fact-finding team. Members of the Council expressed the hope that various political efforts under way would bring positive changes on the ground, including a non-violent resolution of the situation around the Palestinian Authority compound in Ramallah and the earliest arrival of a fact-finding mission in the region.

On 26 April the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs and the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations briefed the Council about the Secretary-General's proposal to dispatch a multinational force to the area of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

During the consultations on 28 April the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs briefed the Council on developments with regard to the fact-finding team. The Council members remained firm in their insistence on the full implementation of resolution 1405 (2002) and were concerned by the delay in the arrival of the fact-finding team. They pointed out that they were expecting a positive report on the decision of the Israeli Cabinet on the team the following day. The Council members supported the Secretary-General's letters sent on 27 April to the Permanent Representative of Israel and the Permanent Observer of Palestine containing clarifications about the team.

On 29 April the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs informed the Council that the Israeli Cabinet would take a decision on the fact-finding team on 30 April because on 29 April there was no meeting of the Cabinet. Meanwhile in Geneva the team continued to get ready for the implementation of its mandate. Some members of the Council reported on the intensive diplomatic efforts under way to find a solution to the siege of the Palestinian Authority headquarters in Ramallah and the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem.

On 30 April the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs informed the Council that the Israeli Cabinet refused to accept the fact-finding team in Jenin until such time as the necessary conditions would be met. Under the circumstances, the Secretary-General intended to disband the team. On behalf of the Arab Group, the Syrian Arab Republic circulated a revised draft resolution in provisional form, but no action was taken.

Europe

Cyprus

On 4 April members of the Council were briefed by the Secretary-General's Special Adviser on Cyprus, Alvaro de Soto, on the results of the second round of direct talks on Cyprus between the two leaders. After the discussion the Council members agreed on a statement to the press by the President of the Security Council in which they expressed their full support for the negotiation process undertaken by the two leaders pursuant to their agreement of 4 December 2001. In

particular they urged the two leaders to focus without delay on narrowing the differences between them on all issues that must be resolved, as part of a comprehensive settlement which takes fully into account relevant United Nations resolutions and international treaties.

Georgia

On 5 April the representative of the Russian Federation informed the Council about the decision by the heads of State of the Commonwealth of Independent States to extend the mandate of the CIS peacekeeping force in Abkhazia, Georgia, until the end of June 2002 and to consider eventual changes in the mandate of the force with regard to possible expansion of the security zone and additional measures to secure the return of refugees and internally displaced persons.

On 29 April the Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations presented a report on the situation in Abkhazia, Georgia. He described the efforts to bring about negotiations between the Abkhaz and Georgian sides on the basis of the paper by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Dieter Boden, on basic principles for the distribution of competences between Tbilisi and Sukhumi. He said that the Abkhaz consistently refused to accept the paper because they claimed Abkhazia's status had already been determined. He stressed that the presence of Georgian troops in the upper Kodori Valley, in violation of the Moscow Agreement, has been a continuing source of concern. He added that Georgia's inability to provide security guarantees had caused the joint CIS peacekeeping force/UNOMIG patrol of the Kodori Valley, scheduled for 25 and 26 April, to be postponed. Consequently, Georgian compliance with the protocol of 2 April could not be verified.

Members of the Council expressed their support for the start of negotiations between the Abkhaz and Georgian sides on the basis of the paper on the distribution of competences. It was noted that trust and confidence must be restored between the sides and that both sides had a responsibility to reduce tensions and begin political negotiations. The Georgian side was called on to fulfil its obligations under relevant protocols to withdraw its troops from the upper Kodori Valley and create conditions for the independent verification of the withdrawal through regular patrols of UNOMIG and the CIS peacekeeping force.

Kosovo, Federal Republic of Yugoslavia

At a public meeting on 24 April the Security Council was briefed by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Kosovo, Michael Steiner, on recent developments in the process of establishing the provisional institutions of self-government and rebuilding social and economic infrastructures in the province. The priorities for the further activity of the Mission were underlined and a concept of benchmarks to measure the progress in Kosovo's institutional development, consistent with resolution 1244 (1999) and the constitutional framework, was introduced. The Deputy Prime Minister of the Yugoslav constituent Republic of Serbia and President of the Coordination Centre of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and the Republic of Serbia for Kosovo and Metohija, Nebojša Čović, participated in the open discussion, which focused on a comprehensive assessment of the implementation of resolution 1244 (1999). Members of the Council encouraged UNMIK and the international security presence (KFOR) in their further efforts to implement fully resolution 1244 (1999) and addressed critical areas: the rule of law, public security, the sustainable return of all displaced persons, peaceful coexistence and freedom of movement for all the inhabitants of Kosovo, and economic development.

On the same day at a formal meeting the Council adopted a presidential statement (S/PRST/2002/11) relating to the matter.

Counter-terrorism

On 2 April members of the Council heard a report by Sir Jeremy Greenstock, Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom and Chairman of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1373 (2001) concerning counter-terrorism, with respect to the current activity of the Committee and its future work as set out in the programme for the Committee's third 90-day period. At a public meeting on 15 April the Chairman gave a briefing on the activities of the Committee. Discussion focused on furthering the Committee's mandate, building a dialogue with international, regional and subregional organizations engaged in the areas covered by the resolution, and exploring ways in which States could be assisted to implement its provisions.

On 15 April, the Council adopted a presidential statement (S/PRST/2002/10), in which it welcomed and confirmed the continuation of the current chairmanship and bureau arrangements of the Committee for a further six months, invited the Committee to report on its activities at regular intervals and agreed to review the structure and activities of the Committee again no later than 4 October 2002.

Food aid in the context of conflict settlement

At a public meeting on 4 April the Security Council was briefed by the outgoing Executive Director of the World Food Programme, Catherine Bertini, on the role of food aid in the context of conflict settlement, particularly in Afghanistan and other crisis areas. The role of food aid not only in putting an end to major famines worldwide but also as an important factor contributing to conflict prevention, recovery and reconstruction, and stabilizing countries in crisis was emphasized. Members of the Council recognized the important work of WFP in Afghanistan and in other conflict areas dealt with by the Council, and highly appreciated the personal efforts of Ms. Bertini during her tenure to make WFP adequately respond to the tasks it faced.